

Surface Blaster Course Description

The Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy's Division of Mineral Mining requires that all individuals seeking Surface Blaster certification must meet the following criteria (4VAC25-35-10; 4VAC25-35-20):

Surface Blaster:

1. Minimum one year blasting duties under direct supervision of a certified blaster.
2. Proper completion of Board of Mineral Mining Examiners Application Form (BMME-1).
3. Proper completion of Board of Mineral Mining Examiners Work Experience Form (BMME-2).
4. Submission of a copy of current MSHA 5000-23, showing First Aid review or a copy of a current first aid card or higher.
5. Submission of \$10 examination fee with BMME-1 and BMME-2 at least five working days before the exam, in the form of a check or money order, payable to the Treasurer of Virginia.
6. Passing the BMME Surface Blaster exam, by scoring at least 80% on each of 5 parts.



Course Objective

This 24-hour course provides basic blasting knowledge and an understanding of safe practices necessary to perform the duties of a surface blaster. Every blaster must possess knowledge of theory and principles of explosives, as well as practical know-how in their storage, handling, transportation, and use. More importantly, every blaster must be aware of what is necessary to prepare and conduct good blasting operations that protect the health and safety of miners and other individuals. Considerations for the adjacent community and the environment must also be top priority.

A surface blaster must have essential training and experience that not only develop skills, but proper safety attitudes as well. Explosives safety is a habit that can only be developed through training, planning, and the repetition of proper procedures.

The surface blaster certification course prepares the applicants for the certification examination. It is for applicants who already possess knowledge and skills in surface mine blasting. It emphasizes the blaster's responsibility to perform blasting duties safely and in compliance with the Mine Safety Act and the Virginia Safety and Health Regulations. The class covers storage, transportation, and use of explosives on a mine site, and electric and nonelectric systems. The examination is given at the end of the course.

Course Material

The Surface Blaster's Certification Study Guide will be provided, as well as copies of Mineral Mine Safety Laws of Virginia and Safety and Health Regulations for Mineral Mining.



Renewal Course

Surface Blaster Certification is required to be renewed every 5 years (4VAC25-35-40). The Board of Mineral Mining Examiners allows a certificate holder to take the appropriate certification renewal course or challenge the renewal examination.

The eight-hour renewal course provides a refresher on the Virginia Mine Safety Act and the Safety and Health Regulations for Mineral Mining. This course is for persons already certified and working as blasters on a mineral mining site.

To obtain copies of applications BMME-1, BMME-2, and BMME-3 call DMM (434) 951-6310, or download from DMM website: <http://www.mme.state.va.us/Dmm/>.



Certification Examination Content

The Surface Blaster's Certification Examination will consist of 5 parts covering the following:

1. Blaster Duties, Responsibilities, and Hazard Recognition (20 questions).
2. Basic Knowledge of Blasting (20 questions).
3. Blasting Design and Control (20 questions).
4. Blast Effects (20 questions).
5. Virginia Law & Regulations Applicable to Blasting (20 questions).



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